



**Virginia Department of Health
Remote Area Medical Clinic
Media Tour
July 2006**

Virginia Board of Health Background

Virginia Board of Health Priorities

The Virginia Board of Health has made chronic disease prevention and control its top priority. Chronic diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes are leading causes of death and disability in Virginia. These diseases threaten the quality of life and life expectancy of many Virginians. Poor diet, physical inactivity, obesity and tobacco use represent preventable risk factors for the development of many chronic diseases. These diseases are very expensive to treat, making prevention and control all the more important, particularly at a time when so many Virginians continue to experience difficulties with access to care.

VDH Overview

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is dedicated to protecting and promoting the health of Virginians. Our vision is for healthy people in healthy communities throughout the Commonwealth. All 7.4 million Virginians benefit, directly or indirectly, from the public health services provided by VDH.

VDH is made up of a central office in Richmond and 35 local health districts. These health districts oversee the operation of 119 local health departments, one for each city and county in Virginia. These entities work together to promote healthy lifestyle choices that help combat chronic disease, educate the public about emergency preparedness and threats to their health, and track disease outbreaks in Virginia, among many other responsibilities.

VDH is led by the State Health Commissioner, who serves as the principal advisor to the Governor, Secretary of Health and Human Resources and the General Assembly on a wide range of public health issues. The 13-member State Board of Health is appointed by the Governor to provide leadership in planning and policy development for the Commonwealth. The Board works with VDH to implement a coordinated, prevention-oriented program that promotes and protects the health of all Virginians. In addition, the Board serves as the primary advocate and representative of the citizens of the Commonwealth in achieving optimal health.



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State Board of Health Members

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